

Docket 97-1681-P

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending in the present application. No Claims have been added, deleted or amended.

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

In the Advisory Action of January 2, 2002, it is stated that the "specification does not define nanostructured". Applicants respectfully submit that the Specification, on Page 1, line 9 to Page 2, line 7, reproduced for convenience below, the particle sizes referred to in the Specification are defined.

Micron-, submicron-, and nanosized carbide powders are important materials for engineering applications. As used herein, "micron-sized" powders refers to powder particles wherein the mean particle size is equal to or greater than about 1.0 microns. "Submicron-sized" powders refers to powder particles wherein the mean particle size is in the range from about 0.1 to about 1.0 microns. "Nanosized" powders refers to powder particles wherein the mean particle size is less than about 0.1 micron (about 100 nm). In certain instances, micron- and submicron-sized particles comprise many nanosized crystalline grains rather than a single, large grain. In these cases, the particles are referred to as "micron- and/or submicron-sized particles with nanostructures" or "micron- and/or submicron-sized, nanostructured particles." Nanosized and micron- and/or submicron-sized, nanostructured particles have a high fraction of atoms located at the grain boundaries of the particle. Such materials accordingly have different, and often advantageous properties compared to conventional particles having the same chemical compositions.

It is clear from the above paragraph that "particles comprising nanosized crystalline grains", "particles with nanostructures" and "nanostructured particles" are equivalent terms. Nanosized is clearly defined as having a mean particle size of less than about 100 nanometers. From the definitions presented above, it is clear nanostructured refers to a material having nanosized crystalline grains, i.e., grains of size less than 100 nanometers. Applicants thus submit that the Specification is clear as to what is meant by nanostructured.

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In the Advisory Action, it is stated that Claim 16 as amended contains "offending terminology". Applicants respectfully request clarification. Claim 16 was amended for consistency with Claim 9, which was previously rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for using the term "carbon precursor". Support for the amendment to Claim 16 can be found in the Specification as filed on Page 10, lines 6-9, wherein the tungsten and cobalt "precursors" are listed and the carbon "source" is also referred to.

In the Advisory Action, it is also stated that a Terminal Disclaimer was not sent. A Terminal Disclaimer was submitted on June 28, 2002. For convenience, a copy of the terminal disclaimer is being sent herewith.

It is believed that the foregoing remarks fully comply with the Office Action and that the claims herein should now be allowable to Applicants. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance is requested.

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If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise,  
please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by the Applicants' Attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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